



City of Albuquerque

Legislative File Number R-06-66 (version 4)

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## **CITY of ALBUQUERQUE SEVENTEENTH COUNCIL**

F/S Requiring a Multi-Purpose Corridor Study and Establishing a Moratorium on Subdivision Approvals in the Tijeras Arroyo Area (Harris)

## **CITY of ALBUQUERQUE SEVENTEENTH COUNCIL**

REQUIRING A MULTI-PURPOSE CORRIDOR STUDY FOR THE SECTION OF THE CITY SOUTH OF CENTRAL AVENUE AND EAST OF EUBANK BOULEVARD, ESTABLISHING A MORATORIUM ON SUBDIVISION APPROVALS IN THE TIJERAS ARROYO AREA TO CONDUCT OPEN SPACE AND CULTURAL SITE STUDIES.

WHEREAS, in the Book "Albuquerque's Environmental Story" Tijeras Arroyo is described as a perennial stream that becomes subsurface at the Four Hills fault. Rock outcroppings and stands of cottonwoods along the stream bed create an open space experience unique in the City. At points between Four Hills Road and Kirtland Air Force Base, the broad expanse of the Tijeras floodplain is over 1,000 ft. wide; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico Tourism Department Historic Markers Data Base identifies Tijeras Canyon as a natural route for travel between eastern New Mexico and the Rio Grande Valley since prehistoric times. Singing Arrow Park overlooking the Canyon was once part of the Carnuel Genizaro Community, (genizor's were outposts that protected Spanish colonial administrative centers) and is on the New Mexico State List of Historical Places; and

WHEREAS, the Tijeras Canyon Safe Passage Coalition reports the wildlife linkage through Tijeras Canyon, which connects the Sandia Mountains to the Manzano Mountains, is one of the most important-and endangered-areas in the Nation for wildlife

passage. The habitat on either side of Interstate-40 provides homes for species such as cougar, bear, and bighorn sheep, among many others. The Interstate severs the two mountain ranges and creates a deadly barrier for animals; and

WHEREAS, to provide for the public's health, welfare and safety, the land use conditions of the Arroyo must be changed. Several subdivisions have developed in the bottom of the Canyon floor. Abandoned facilities exist in the Tijeras Arroyo Flood Plain and several government agencies have holdings within the Canyon and on the Mesas overlooking the Arroyo that are not developable; and

WHEREAS, the City should set aside additional open space to provide for the protection of the riverine environment and maintain the 500 year flood plain required by the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area Flood Control Authority; and

WHEREAS, in the past 40 years the Four Hills Neighborhood, the Four Hills Mobile Home Park, the Singing Arrow Neighborhood, Eastern Kirtland Air-Force Base, Sandia National Laboratories, the Sandia Science and Technology Park, that upon build-out will have over 6000 employees and Juan Tabo Hills, currently under development that will add over 3000 residents (surround the Tijeras Arroyo); and

WHEREAS, these communities span an east west distance from Central Avenue to the Kirtland Air-Force Base's Northeast Fence of one and three quarters miles but are not served by an east west collector road. The Four Hills Neighborhood and the Juan Tabo Hills Development will not share an east west connector street. These deficiencies in road connectivity and the additional residents and workers to the area will result in traffic safety issues for the Four Hills Mobile Home Park and the Singing Arrow Neighborhoods and impatient motorists speeding in the Four Hills Neighborhood on the long egress and ingress route into the neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, Albuquerque residents consider reducing cut-through traffic in residential areas an issue of concern and the City of Albuquerque expends resources to mitigate this problem; and

WHEREAS, there is a need for a corridor study to address transportation and neighborhood traffic safety in the area of the City south of Central Avenue and east of Eubank Boulevard and open space issues in the Tijeras Arroyo Corridor; and

WHEREAS, corporations assembling projects in the Corridor Area east of Kirtland

Air Force Base provided open space areas for the Juan Tabo Hills Project and are preparing additional dedications of lands for projects west of Juan Tabo Hills; and

WHEREAS, subdivision approvals issued in the Tijeras Arroyo area, as shown in Exhibit A1 (amended) to this legislation, between now and completion of a corridor study may adversely affect or negate the future use and preservation of the arroyo. The City should postpone subdivision approvals in the Tijeras Arroyo area; and

WHEREAS, funding has been set aside in the Planning Department's 2007 General Fund Budget to complete this type of study.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL, THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE:

Section 1. The City shall conduct a corridor study within the areas identified in "Amended Exhibits A1 and A2" to this Resolution. The study shall be underway within three months of the enactment of this legislation. Throughout development of the study the Administration shall seek the advice and consultation of the City Councilor from Albuquerque City Council District 9 and provide monthly status reports on the progress of the study.

Section 2. Upon enactment of this legislation a six month moratorium is imposed upon all subdivision approvals in the area delineated in Exhibit A1 (amended) to this legislation.

Section 3. The Department of Municipal Development shall form a public input team that shall include, but is not limited to, representatives from neighborhood associations, major land owners that adjoin the Tijeras Arroyo, corporations developing or preparing to develop communities in the corridor area, a member from the Open Space Board, a representative from Sandia Science and Technology Park, the New Mexico State Land Office and Kirtland Air Force Base.

Section 4. The Department of Municipal Development will develop a report to be delivered to Council recommending a preferred alternative. The report shall provide to be advanced for further review, but is not limited to, a travel needs analysis of the performance of various transportation improvements, including street, trail, and transit, on the area transportation system, identify collector street alignment alternatives that would prevent future traffic safety issues from occurring in the study areas including a

"no-build alternative for a collector street", scenarios for improving connections between the Eubank Gate of Kirtland Air Force Base and Juan Tabo Boulevard, preservation of additional open space in the arroyo, development and or preservation of cultural properties, trail development to link the open space and the cultural properties in the Tijeras Arroyo, use of roadway design to preserve animal crossings and the protection or re-establishment of the riverine environment of the arroyo floor.

Section 5. The Department shall form a technical team that includes, but is not limited to, representatives from the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area Flood Control Authority, Bernalillo County, Kirtland Air Force Base, the Parks and Recreation Department, and the Albuquerque Environmental Health Department.

Section 6. The report shall review the engineering feasibility and the environmental, physical and social impacts of each alternative. The study shall include a public input process and provide surrounding Neighborhood Associations opportunity to comment and give input on reasonable alternatives.

Section 7. The Department of Municipal Development and the Planning Department shall conduct meetings as needed between the public input team and the technical team established by this Resolution and any technical teams or citizen committees established for the purposes of implementing the sector plan and redevelopment areas in the vicinity of Central Avenue east of Eubank Boulevard mandated by F/S(2) R-06-18.